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## FOREWORD

### Teams

A team is defined as a group that is organized to work together. Each DOE facility is staffed with sufficient personnel to safely and effectively operate the facility. The overall facility organization is in itself a team since the smaller organizations and departments that comprise the larger facility organization work together in support of the facility's mission. Similarly, within each smaller organization or department, there are work groups which perform specific functions in support of their larger parent organization. These smaller work groups also represent teams.

Each team has characteristics which make up its identity, just as each person has characteristics that make them an individual. To understand how a team functions, one must first understand the characteristics which make up a team. There are five easily identifiable team characteristics: output, objective, structure, atmosphere, and energy. Each of these is discussed briefly as follows.

**Output.** A team's output is its most visible characteristic. The hallmark of a team is its ability to produce . . . to "deliver the goods." Collectively, a team is capable of achieving results that the team members individually can not do. The team members' diverse talents combine in the team to produce deliverables beyond their individual capacities.

**Objective.** Each team needs an objective or purpose; their reason for being. The purpose must be understood, shared, and felt to be worthwhile by each team member. Simply stated, the purpose can be described as the team's mission. Additionally, there are specific objectives that the team, both collectively and individually must commit to achieve. Mature teams draw strength and direction from a shared understanding of a common purpose and from identification of how each member's objectives contribute towards the achievement of that purpose.

**Structure.** An effective team possesses an efficient internal structure, one that allows the team to capitalize on its strengths. The mature team has successfully dealt with thorny questions concerning control, leadership, procedures, organization, and individual roles. The team's structure is finely adapted to the tasks undertaken, and the individual team member's talents and contributions are used without confusion. Team members with a drive for leadership learn to understand each other and to cope with any feelings of hostility, competitiveness, or aggression. The successful team becomes flexible, responsive, orderly, and directed.

**Atmosphere.** As a team matures, it develops a distinctive spirit or atmosphere. This team spirit should encourage and facilitate openness and support between team members. Individual team members identify with the team, and its success or failure is viewed by the team members as their individual success or failure. The members of a successful team extend themselves to serve the

interests of the team. Such a team develops an atmosphere within which confidence can be shared, personal difficulties worked through, and risks undertaken.

**Energy.** Lastly, energy is the lifeblood of the successful team. Team members take strength from one another. Collectively, team members feel more empowered and find that team activities renew their vitality and enjoyment. The word “synergy” describes this special group energy. Synergy is effectively explained using the mathematically improbable but psychologically accurate statement  $2 + 2 = 5$ . The successful team develops a character and capacity beyond the sum of its individual members.

## Teamwork

Effective teams produce exceptional results and achieve success despite difficulties. This is not by chance or coincidence. Rather, a team’s exceptional results and successes are accomplished because all members of the team work together. This cooperative effort by the members of a team to achieve a common goal is called teamwork.

The effectiveness of an organization to accomplish anything is greatly influenced by the quality of cooperation among its groups and among its individual members. Simply stated, if teamwork is desired, individual elements of a group must cooperate. Cooperation makes working together effective and also creates a pleasant work environment. To be considered effective, a team must possess the following attributes: a) singleness of mission and a willingness to cooperate, b) commitment to the idea that working together as a group leads to more effective decisions, c) mutually depend upon one another’s experiences, abilities, and commitments; d) accountability as a functioning unit; and e) not viewing teamwork as a spectator sport.

**Singleness of mission.** A singleness of mission and a willingness to cooperate must exist if a team is to succeed. Mere formal reporting relationships within organizational structures does not constitute a team, even if people appear grouped that way on an organizational chart. Boxes and arrows symbolize neither the technical and interpersonal coordination, nor the emotional investment (i.e., the commitment) that go into the true team.

Singleness of mission constitutes a natural reason for working together. In other words, it is the common goal of the team. A common goal must be specific and must be agreed upon by all members of the team. For example, working within a group merely to collect a paycheck does not make one a part of that group. Although collecting a paycheck is a goal of the individual, it is probably not one of the goals for the group. However, producing a flawless deliverable that is part of a larger end product is considered contributing to the goal of the group if the goal of the group is to produce a flawless end product.

**Commitment to the idea that working together as a group leads to more effective decisions.**

Members of a group must be committed to the ideal that working together as a group, rather than in isolation leads to more effective decisions. Although an individual using all of his/her knowledge and attributes can make a big difference in an organization, they rarely have enough knowledge or experience to understand everything that goes on in a process or facility. It is for this very reason that major gains in quality operation and facility productivity most often result from teams . . . a group of people pooling their individual skills, talents, and knowledge for the benefit of the whole.

The members of the group must be mutually dependent on one another's experience, abilities, and commitment in order to fulfill mutual objectives. Teams have a distinct advantage over solo efforts . . . the mutual support that arises between team members. Quality improvement requires hard work and takes a long time. It is all too easy for one person's commitment and enthusiasm to lag during a long project. The synergy that comes from people working together productively on an important project is usually enough to sustain the enthusiasm and support, even through difficult times.

## INTRODUCTION

Because of its many advantages over traditional approaches, the team structure is selected for Enhanced Work Planning (EWP) to use the synergy of bringing together varied disciplines and perspectives to address common issues. However, bringing a group of people together to work as a team does not guarantee instant success. There are unique challenges associated with working in teams. An understanding of teams, how they develop, and what makes them effective, can help team leaders and team members get the most value from the team experience.

This Team Skills Tool Kit is designed to provide concise information and exercises to help enhance the effectiveness of the team. This Tool Kit addresses:

- Characteristics of effective teams
- Developing goals and objectives
- Involving all team members
- Addressing conflict
- Shared leadership
- Establishing team processes
- Interpersonal communication
- Building creativity and synergy
- Problem solving and decision making

The Tool Kit is designed for use as needed by the team leader to enhance the effectiveness of the EWP team. Team leaders may want to use the tools proactively, to address the skills needed at appropriate times in the team's development, or they may prefer to use the tools only when an area needing improvement is identified through an assessment of the team. The Team Effectiveness Critique introduced in Characteristics of Effective Teams can be used for this assessment.

## Using the Team Skills Tool Kit

While each team is unique, research has shown that teams go through several common stages of development. An understanding of these stages, commonly referred to as forming, storming, norming, and performing, can help both team members and team leaders apply appropriate skills as needed to work through any rough spots in the process.

**Team Development Stage 1, Forming** - In the early stages of team development, team members may be unsure of the team's goals and objectives, and uncertain of the role they will play in achieving them. They may have questions about their level of involvement, how they will like working with the other members of the team, and how their ideas will be received by others.

In Stage 1, team members need help identifying their mission, goals, and objectives. They may also need help establishing their team processes and team norms. Leadership of the team in Stage 1 is primarily provided by the team leader.

For assistance in learning skills to help the team move through Stage 1, the following tools are suggested:

- Characteristics of Effective Teams, Part 1
- Developing Goals and Objectives
- Establishing Team Procedures

**Team Development Stage 2, Storming** - In Stage 2, team members are becoming more comfortable as a member of a team and are more willing to express themselves and their ideas. They are beginning to take responsibility for more of the team interactions and feel more ownership of team decisions. However, there may still be confusion over team goals and roles on the team, especially if these issues were not resolved in Stage 1. It is during Stage 2 that team members may more openly express their differences of opinions or frustrations with the challenges of working on a team. This stage may include more disagreement and conflict among team members, or the expression of frustration by individual team members.

In Stage 2, team members need to establish norms for how they will work together, how they will resolve differences, and how they will support each others' needs on the team. Team members may begin to take on some of the leadership responsibilities, but will still look to the team leader for guidance through these rough waters.

For building team skills needed in Stage 2, the following tools are recommended:

- Characteristics of Effective Teams, Part 2
- Interpersonal Communication

- Addressing Conflict
- Involving All Team Members

**Team Development Stage 3, Norming** - As teams progress to Stage 3, they have established their goals and objectives, as well resolved the major issues related to how they will work together to accomplish those goals. In stage 3, the team is becoming more productive in using the processes of teamwork. They are establishing procedures and adopting methods for solving problems and making decisions. Members of the team are beginning to share leadership responsibilities (e.g., running meetings, promoting open dialogue on issues, facilitating decision making, supporting team members' needs, managing conflict, communicating with stakeholders).

For building team skills needed in Stage 2, the following tools are recommended:

- Tools that may be helpful to the team in Stage 3 are:
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Creativity
- Shared Leadership

**Team Development Stage 4, Performing** - Stage 4 of team development is the period of time during which the team is most productive. Team members work collaboratively toward the team objectives. Team leadership is shared, team members recognize each other for their contribution, and team successes are celebrated. While changes in the team's goals, membership, or leadership may temporarily inhibit the team's effectiveness, team members have developed skills in teamwork to manage these setbacks and get back on track.

In Stage 4, teams may want to periodically assess their team's effectiveness using the tool, Characteristics of Effective Teams, Part 2.

In summary, the following matrix may be helpful in selecting the team skills tool for the development needs of your team:

<i>Stages</i>	<i>Team Characteristics in this Stage</i>	<i>Tools for Team Development</i>
Stage 1	Learning to get to know each other Uncertain about goals and roles Dependent on leader	Characteristics of Effective Teams, Part 1 Developing Goals and Objectives Establishing Team Processes
Stage 2	More open expression of ideas/concerns Potential for increased conflict Beginning to share leadership Establishing team norms and procedures	Interpersonal Communication Addressing Conflict Involving All Team Members

<i>Stages</i>	<i>Team Characteristics in this Stage</i>	<i>Tools for Team Development</i>
Stage 3	Team norms and procedures are more established Team members learning to work together to solve problems and make decisions	Problem Solving and Decision Making Building Creativity and Synergy Shared Leadership
Stage 4	Team members work collaboratively toward team goals Leadership responsibilities are shared by all team members	Characteristics of Effective Teams, Part 2

### Using the Team Skills Tool Kit to Address Specific Problems

Because there are so many variables influencing team dynamics, it is often difficult to try to diagnose or second guess what may be causing problems within a team. Team members have different interpersonal styles, different value systems, and different perspectives. Outside factors, such as the organizational culture or stakeholder involvement, can also influence team dynamics. The first tool, “Characteristics of Effective Teams,” introduces a method for teams to assess their progress against a core list of factors that contribute to the development of effective teams. It is recommended that teams use an assessment tool and discussion of the problem rather than try to “diagnose” the problem based on observed events alone. With that caution in mind, the matrix below provides a quick look at some common problems encountered by teams and suggests tools from the Team Skills Tool Kit that may be helpful in addressing those problems.

<i>Common Team Problems</i>	<i>Tools that may be helpful</i>
Confusion around goals and responsibilities	Developing Goals and Objectives
Uneven sharing of workload	Involving All Team Members Shared Leadership
Team members withdrawing from team	Developing Goals and Objectives Involving All Team Members Addressing Conflict Interpersonal Skills Shared Leadership
Lack of progress toward team goals	Developing Goals and Objectives Establishing Team Processes Involving All Team Members Problem Solving and Decision Making Building Creativity and Synergy

<i>Common Team Problems</i>	<i>Tools that may be helpful</i>
Unproductive team meetings	Establishing Team Processes
One person dominates team activities	Involving All Team Members Shared Leadership Interpersonal Communication

**Accountability as a functioning unit.** The effective group must be accountable as a functioning entity within a larger organizational context. Each member should realize that the performance of activities by the team will be viewed as a consolidated effort by a much larger organizational entity. That means if a certain team has problems with safety or production, the larger organization will not single out an individual, but single out the team. It is also true that if the team is excelling in an area of safety or production, the larger organization will commend the team. Members must feel responsible for the output of their team and act to remove difficulties that impede progress.

**Teamwork is not a spectator sport.** A team is only as strong and effective as the collective sum of its members. Effective and mature teams have the active participation of each team member. Effective teamwork is an observable trait. However, one must not only observe other teams, one must constantly observe the performance of his/her own team. An effective team member will take a lesson learned by another team and apply it in their own team. If one is part of a team, one must do one's part to make that team the very best it can be. One must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of one's team and act to solidify and enhance strengths and identify and correct weaknesses in one's own team as well as in others.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS

### INTRODUCTION:

While there are many potential benefits to working through teams, bringing together a diverse group of people to address common issues does not guarantee success. There are a number of factors that impact team effectiveness. Attention to these factors can help the team develop into a highly effective team.

### WHAT:

This tool consists of two parts. Part 1 is a discussion exercise to help teams identify their past experiences and expectations related to working on teams, and to introduce the characteristics of effective teams. Part 2 applies the Team Effectiveness Critique to help teams assess their progress.

### WHY:

This tool is designed to help the team:

- A. Identify characteristics of effective teams
- B. Periodically assess their effectiveness

### WHEN:

Use Part 1 of this tool early in the team's development to help establish expectations and team norms. Use Part 2 of this tool periodically throughout the team's development.

### TIME:

Part 1 and Part 2 each take approximately 30 minutes.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Flip chart and markers
- Copies of Descriptions of Team Effectiveness Factors for each team member
- Copies of Team Effectiveness Critique for each team member

## Part 1

**INTRODUCE** the concept that bringing a group of people together doesn't necessarily mean the team will be effective. We have probably all experienced both effective and ineffective teams in our lives.

**ASK** everyone to individually and privately think of an experience they have had on a team that they felt was an effective team that reached successful results. Have them jot down 3-4 factors they felt contributed to that team's success or made it a worthwhile experience for them.

**ASK** for volunteers to share items from their lists. Capture main themes on the flip chart. Involve as many members as are willing to share.

**REVIEW** the list with the group, looking for common themes.

**SUMMARIZE** by expressing to the group that we have all had experiences with teams and have recognized factors that made these team experiences rewarding and successful. Introduce the concept that these are factors that contribute to team effectiveness. These factors are identified by behaviors that are observed in team interaction. Additionally, these factors can be measured or assessed by the team itself. Several of these factors are commonly found in highly effective teams.

**HANDOUT** the descriptions of the team effectiveness criteria.

**DISCUSS** each factor, referring back to the list generated by the team where appropriate.

If you wish to assess the team at this time, proceed to Part 2.

## **Part 2**

HANDOUT the descriptions of the team effectiveness criteria.

DISCUSS each factor, referring back to the list generated by the team where appropriate.

HANDOUT the Team Effectiveness Critique. Ask team members to individually assess the team by circling the number on each scale that they feel is most descriptive of the team.

ASK team members to share and discuss their rating of the team. This can either be done anonymously by having team members submit their ratings to be consolidated, or it can be done as a full group discussion. Ratings can either be charted individually to show the consensus, or lack thereof, of the group; or the ratings can be reported as an average to ensure anonymity for the respondents. In either case, the team should discuss and try to reach some understanding of how they perceive their team is functioning in each of these areas.

FACILITATE the discussion of the team's perceived strengths and areas for improvement, and help the team identify actions they would like to take to improve in those areas.

## TEAM EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA - BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS

1. **Goals and Objectives:** In order for a team to operate effectively, it must have stated goals and objectives, and team members must be committed to reaching goals. Time spent setting goals and objectives early in the team's development will enhance the team cohesiveness and focus.
2. **Utilization of Resources:** Team effectiveness is enhanced when every member has the opportunity to contribute and when all opinions are heard and considered.
3. **Trust and Conflict:** Any time a group of people work together, there is an opportunity for disagreement and conflict. For a team to reach an optimum level of performance, they must learn how to manage conflicts effectively by developing a climate of openness, respect, and trust.
4. **Leadership:** In the early stages of team development, team members may look toward the team leader to direct the team on task functions, such as initiating discussion, clarifying issues, and checking for consensus; as well as guide the team maintenance functions, such as drawing everyone into the discussion, mediating conflict, and supporting and motivating the team. But, as the team develops, the responsibility for these team leadership functions becomes a shared responsibility among the team members.
5. **Control and Procedures:** As with any organization, a team needs some element of control and procedures to guide its activities, such as a meeting agenda, minutes, and action plans. Involving the team members in establishing the team norms and procedures builds commitment and cohesion among the team members.
6. **Interpersonal Communications:** Effective team development depends on the ability of team members to communicate with one another in an honest and open manner. Team members clearly assert their ideas and listen openly to others thoughts. Team members participate freely in the discussion.
7. **Problem Solving and Decision Making:** Effective teams have an agreed upon approach to identifying problems, evaluating potential solutions, and making decisions. The lack of an agreed upon approach can result in wasted time, misunderstandings, lack of commitment to the decision, and poor quality decisions.
8. **Experimentation/Creativity:** While it is important for teams to have agreed upon approaches to problem solving and decision making, a part of those processes should include looking for new ideas or new solutions to the task. This is the

synergy that comes from the various team members sharing ideas and building upon each other's ideas to come up with new, even better, approaches. Effective teams utilize brainstorming, alternative possible solutions, and other methods of generating creativity and synergy on the team.

9. **Evaluation:** Even the most effective teams need to stop occasionally and check how they are doing in accomplishing their tasks and how they are functioning as a team. This evaluation or critique can help the team pinpoint and correct factors that are preventing them from being fully effective.

## **The Team Effectiveness Critique®**

by Mark Alexander<sup>1</sup>

Most groups exist and persist because (a) the purpose of the group cannot be accomplished by individuals working on their own, and (b) certain needs of individual members can be satisfied by belonging to the group. Of course, the mere existence of a group does not ensure that it will operate effectively; a group is effective only to the degree to which it is able to use its individual and collective resources. The measure of the group's effectiveness is its ability to achieve its objectives and satisfy the needs of the individuals in the group.

An organization is a collection of groups. The success of an organization depends on the ability of the groups within it to work together to attain commonly held objectives. Because organizations are becoming increasingly more complex, their leaders must be concerned with developing more cohesive and cooperative relationships between individuals and groups. Similarly, the development of effective groups or teams within the organization will determine, to a large extent, the ability of the organization to attain its goals.

### **Factors Contributing to Team Development And Effectiveness**

Team development is based on the assumption that any group is able to work more effectively if its members are prepared to confront questions such as: How can this collection of individuals work together more effectively as a team? How can we better use the resources we represent? How can we communicate with one another more effectively to make better decisions? What is impeding our performance?

The answers to these questions may be found by examining the factors that lead to team development and effectiveness. These factors can be measured, or inventoried, by team members with the use of the Team Effectiveness Critique. Before the critique form is administered, however, all team members should understand the terminology used to describe the nine factors. The following descriptions can be presented in a lecturette format to the team members prior to completion of the critique.

#### **1. Shared Goals and Objectives**

In order for a team to operate effectively, it must have stated goals and objectives. These goals are not a simple understanding of the immediate task, but an overall understanding of the role of the group in the total organization, its responsibilities, and the things the team wants to accomplish. In addition, the members of the team must be committed to the goals. Such commitment comes from involving all team members in defining the goals and relating the goals to specific problems that are relevant to team members. The time

spent on goal definition in the initial stages of a team's life results in less time needed later to resolve problems and misunderstandings.

## **2. Utilization of Resources**

The ultimate purpose of a team is to do things effectively. In order to accomplish this, the team must use effectively all the resources at its disposal. This means establishing an environment that allows individual resources to be used. Team effectiveness is enhanced when every member has the opportunity to contribute and when all opinions are heard and considered. It is the team's responsibility to create an atmosphere in which individuals can state their opinions without fear of ridicule or reprisal. It is each individual's responsibility to contribute information and ideas and to be prepared to support them with rational arguments. Maximum utilization of team members requires full participation and self-regulation.

## **3. Trust and Conflict Resolution**

In any team situation, disagreement is likely to occur. The ability to openly recognize conflict and seek to resolve it through discussion is critical to the team's success. People do not automatically work well together just because they happen to belong to the same work group or share the same job function. For a team to become effective, it must deal with the emotional problems and needs of its members and the interpersonal problems that arise in order to build working relationships that are characterized by openness and trust. The creation of a feeling of mutual trust, respect, and understanding and the ability of the team to deal with the inevitable conflicts that occur in any group situation are key factors in team development.

## **4. Shared Leadership**

Individuals will not function as a team if they are brought together simply to "rubber stamp" decisions made by their leader or others not in the group. The development and cohesion of a team occurs only when there is a feeling of shared leadership among all team members. This means that all members accept some responsibility for task functions—those things necessary to do the job—and maintenance functions—those things necessary to keep the group together and interacting effectively. *Task* functions include initiating discussions or actions, clarifying issues and goals, summarizing points, testing for consensus or agreement, and seeking or giving information. Task leadership helps the group to establish its direction and assists the group in moving toward its goals. Maintenance functions include encouraging involvement and participation, sensing and expressing group feelings, harmonizing and facilitating reconciliation of disagreements, setting standards for the group, and "gatekeeping" or bringing people into discussions. No one person can be expected to perform all these required leadership functions

effectively all the time. Groups perform better when all members perform both task and maintenance functions.

## **5. Control and Procedures**

A group needs to establish procedures that can be used to guide or regulate its activities. For example, a meeting agenda serves to guide group activities during a meeting. Schedules of when specific actions will be taken also regulate team activities. Team development and team-member commitment is facilitated through maximum involvement in the establishment of agendas, schedules, and other procedures. Of course, the team should determine how it wishes to maintain control. In meeting situations, control most often is achieved through the appointment of a chairperson whose responsibility is to facilitate the procedure established by the team. Some teams find that they do not need a formal leader; each member regulates his or her own contributions and behavior as well as those of others.

## **6. Effective Interpersonal Communications**

Effective team development depends on the ability of team members to communicate with one another in an open and honest manner. Effective interpersonal communications are apparent when team members listen to one another and attempt to build on one another's contributions. Effective interpersonal communications are achieved through self-regulation by team members, so that everyone in the group has an equal opportunity to participate in discussions.

## **7. Approach to Problem Solving and Decision Making**

Solving problems and making decisions are two critical team functions. If a group is going to improve its ability to function as a team, recognized methods for solving problems and making decisions should be studied and adopted. The lack of agreed-on approaches to problem solving and decision making can result in wasted time, misunderstanding, frustration, and—more importantly—“bad” decisions.

A generally accepted, step-by-step procedure for problem solving and decision making is as follows:

- a. Identify the problem (being careful to differentiate between the real problem and symptoms of the problem).
- b. Develop criteria (or goals).
- c. Gather relevant data.
- d. Identify all feasible, alternative solutions or courses of action.
- e. Evaluate the alternatives in light of the data and the objectives of the team.

- f. Reach a decision.
- g. Implement the decision.

Needless to say, there are variations of this procedure. However, whatever method is used, an effective team will have an agreed-on approach to problem solving and decision making that is shared and supported by all members.

## **8. Experimentation/Creativity**

Just as it is important for a team to have certain structured procedures, it is also important that the team be prepared occasionally to move beyond the boundaries of established procedures and processes in order to experiment with new ways of doing things. Techniques such as “brainstorming” as a means of increasing creativity should be tried periodically to generate new ways to increase the team’s effectiveness. An experimental attitude should be adopted in order to allow the team greater flexibility in dealing with problems and decision-making situations.

## **9. Evaluation**

The team periodically should examine its group processes from both task and maintenance aspects. This examination or “critique” requires the team to stop and look at how well it is doing and what if anything, may be hindering its operation. Problems may result from procedures or methods, or may be caused by individual team members. Such problems should be resolved through discussion before the team attempts further task accomplishment. Effective self-evaluation is probably one of the most critical factors leading to team development.

Ultimately, the strength and degree of a team’s development will be measured in two ways; first, in its ability to get things done—its effectiveness—and second, in terms of its cohesiveness—the sense of belonging that individual members have and the degree of their commitment to one another and the goals of the team.

### **Use of the Team Effectiveness Critique**

The periodic review of a team's operating practices in light of the factors leading to team development is a simple and useful method for improving a team's effectiveness. The Team Effectiveness Critique can be used as an observational tool by an independent observer or as an intervention device for the entire team. In this case, the critique should be completed by each individual team members, who will then share his or her assessment with the entire team. This sharing can be expanded to a consensus activity by asking team members to reach a common assessment for each of the nine factors. (This use of the critique would be most appropriate with ongoing organizational teams). Agreement about areas in which improvements could be made would then lead to team action planning.

The critique also can be used as an experiential training device. Participants would be asked to complete a group task on a simulation basis and would then assess their teamwork using the critique form. Again, the group members would discuss their assessments with one another, focusing on generally recognized weaknesses.

The Team Effectiveness Critique is intended to be used as a training and team-development tool; it is not intended to be used for statistical or research purposes. Therefore, the face validity has been established.

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## The Team Effectiveness Critique<sup>®</sup>

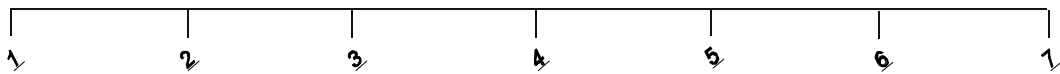
by Mark Alexander<sup>1</sup>

**Instructions:** Indicate on the scales that follow your assessment of your team and the way it functions by circling the number on each scale that you feel is most descriptive of your team.

1. **Goals and Objectives**

There is a lack of commonly understood goals and objectives.

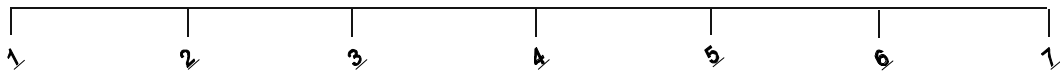
Team members understand and agree on goals and objectives.



2. **Utilization of Resources**

All member resources are not recognized and/or utilized.

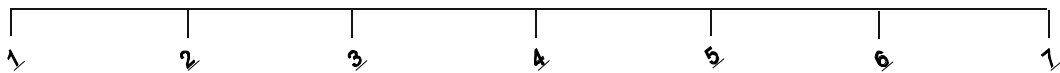
Member resources are fully recognized and utilized.



3. **Trust and Conflict**

There is little trust among members, and conflict is evident.

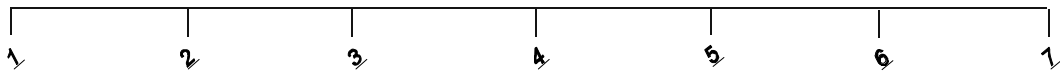
There is a high degree of trust among members, and conflicts dealt with openly and worked through.



4. **Leadership**

One person dominates, and leadership roles are not carried out or shared.

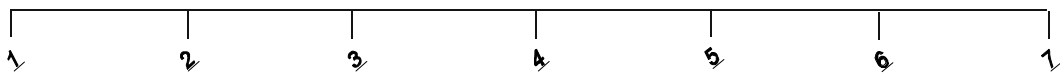
There is full participation in leadership; leadership roles are shared by members.



5. **Control and Procedures**

There is little control, and there is a lack of procedures to guide team functioning.

There are effective procedures to guide team functioning; team members support these procedures and regulate themselves.

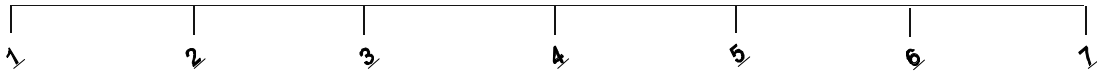


### The Team Effectiveness Critique<sup>®</sup> (continued)

6. **Interpersonal Communications** Communications

between members  
are closed and guarded.

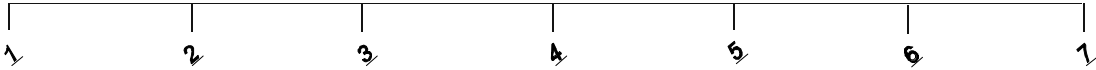
Communications between  
members are open and participate.



7. **Problem Solving/Decision Making**

The team has no agreed-on approaches to problem  
solving and decision making.

The team has well-established and  
agreed-on approaches to problems  
solving and decision making.



8. **Experimentation/Creativity**

The team is rigid and does not experiment with how  
things are done.

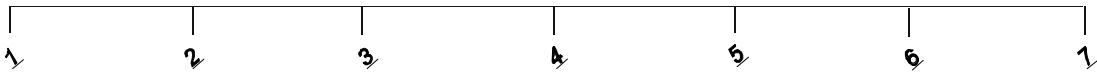
The team experiments with  
different ways of doing things  
and is creative in its approach.



9. **Evaluation**

The group never evaluates its  
functioning or process.

The group often evaluates its  
functioning and process.



## **DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

In order for a team to operate effectively, it must have stated goals and objectives, and team members must be committed to reaching those goals. Time spent setting goals and objectives early in the team's development will enhance team cohesiveness and focus.

### **WHAT:**

This tool leads the team through the process of setting goals and objectives.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help the team:

- A. Develop team purpose, goals, and objectives.
- B. Build commitment toward the team goals among team members.

### **WHEN:**

Use this tool early in team development to build a foundation upon which all of the team's efforts are based. Revisit as needed when new goals are identified or team seems unfocused.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 60 minutes.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

None

## Process:

### INTRODUCTION

1. DEFINE briefly the difference between purpose, goals and objectives as they are used in this tool.

**Purpose** - a concise statement of team's overall reason for existing.

**Goals** - 3-4 main results or evidence of success.

**Objectives** - specific actions to be taken in support of reaching that goal.

2. SHARE a simple example, such as:

Purpose: To improve my health.

Goal #1: Reduce my weight by 10 lbs. over the next 3 months.

Objectives: 1) Reduce number of sodas to 1 per day.  
2) Increase exercise to 3 times per week.

### Part 1: Clarify the Purpose of the Team

1. CLARIFY the expectations of the sponsors of the team by asking them:
  - What is the purpose of the team?
  - How does this team's purpose fit in with overall organization's goals and objectives?
  - What are 2-3 things that you feel might be tackled by this team in order to reach that goal?
  - What outcomes, both tangible and intangible, do you anticipate will come from this team's efforts?
  - What would success of this team look like to you?
  - How will success be measured?
  - What are our time line or resource constraints?
2. INVITE team champion or sponsors to kick-off first team meeting with a brief statement to team regarding the purpose, goals, expectations, and constraints.
3. As a team, DEFINE and CLARIFY your purpose by reviewing the questions above.

4. ASK team members to re-state in their own words the purpose (or mission) of the team and what it means to them. Discuss responses in the full group until you can come to a consensus on the purpose of the team.
5. GENERATE discussion by asking team members to finish the statements:  
  
“Our team’s main purpose is to....”  
“This team is established to...”
6. The purpose statement should be a concise statement of the team’s overall reason for existing, such as “This team is established to improve the work planning process at the INEEL.”
7. DOCUMENT the team’s purpose and post it at each meeting and on every meeting agenda. Keep it visible to the team to focus their efforts.

## **Part 2: Identify Goals of the Team**

The second step is to discuss criteria for success which will help team identify the goals of the team. This step may not be easy to do until the team has had time to explore the issue being addressed by the team. You may want to postpone this step until your team has had time to become more knowledgeable of the issues at hand.

1. ASK each team member to visualize this team a year from now . . . a successful, productive team. Stimulate thinking by asking them to finish this sentence: “The efforts of this team will result in....” What would they see? What would the team look like? What would have occurred? What would be different? Have them consider these questions from the various perspectives of the stakeholders, such as the team members, the sponsor, the overall organization, their respective functional areas, as well as the others in the organization affected by the issue(s) they are addressing.

SHARE the results with the full group and capture main themes such as reduced costs, improved quality, and reduce steps in process. Get consensus on the 3-4 main goals of the team.

2. DOCUMENT the team’s goals in 3-4 concise statements, such as:
  - Develop a consolidated work planning procedure for all INEEL work.
  - Establish key roles and responsibilities for work planning at the INEEL.
  - Develop training for all employees involved in the new work planning procedure.

### **Part 3: Specify Objectives**

The team should then develop specific objectives for each goal listed by asking, “What can we do to work toward that goal?” or, “What actions would contribute to reaching that goal?” Objectives should be written as specific action statements in support of reaching a specific goal.

For example, some objectives for a work planning team might include:

- Identify current work planning process
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Develop enhanced process

### **Part 4: Tracking Progress**

The final step is to identify how your team will measure their success. Identifying the “how” relative to measuring success early in the team’s development helps to use common language in discussing the team’s efforts, focuses the team on a common set of objective criteria, and helps the team track their progress. The team may want to identify means to track both their completion of the objectives and their progress toward goals.

First ask the team to define what a meaningful measurement might be and how can that information be tracked. What means of measurement are currently available? Does your team have access to those measurements? For example:

- Training records will track completion of training goals
- Team minutes will track completion of team objectives.

### **Part 5: Building Commitment**

Once the purpose and goals of the team are established, team members should take time to individually reflect upon how the goals of this team relate to their individual and functional group goals. Take time away from the team to think about the personal and organizational “WIIFM” (What’s in it for me?) issues. This reflection can help team members build commitment to the team and better represent the team’s goals back in their functional organizations.

## **INVOLVING ALL TEAM MEMBERS**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

As we have defined it, a team is a group of people who must work together in order to accomplish a common goal. Team effectiveness is enhanced when every member is comfortable and motivated to contribute to the team. It is the individual team member's responsibility to participate in the team, and it is the collective responsibility of the team to create an atmosphere where members have an opportunity to contribute.

### **WHAT:**

This tool is a group exercise that highlights the importance of being open to other's input, and sharing your own resources, in order to accomplish team goals.

### **WHY:**

This exercise is designed to demonstrate the value of cooperation and sharing resources on teams.

### **WHEN:**

This tool can be used at any time in the team's development to reinforce the value of cooperation and contributing on teams.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 45 minutes.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- A set of broken squares (prepared according to directions following) for each group of 5. (Can be modified for other size groups, but 5 is optimum.)
- One copy of the Instruction Sheet for each group of 5.
- One copy of Observer Guidelines for each group of 5.
- Table top work area with seating for 5 for each group. (Space tables far enough apart that teams cannot view each other's work area easily.)

## **Broken Squares: Nonverbal Problem-Solving**

### **I. Goals**

- A. To analyze some aspects of cooperation in solving a group problem.
- B. To sensitize participants to behaviors which may contribute toward or obstruct the solving of a group problem.

### **II. Group Size**

Any number of groups of six participants each. There are five participants and an observer/judge in each group.

### **III. Time Required**

Approximately 45 minutes.

### **IV. Physical Setting**

A table that will seat five participants is needed for each group. Tables should be spaced far enough apart so that no group can see the puzzle-solving results of other groups.

## Process

The facilitator begins with a discussion of the meaning of cooperation. This discussion should lead to hypotheses about what is essential to successful group cooperation in problem-solving. The facilitator indicates that the group will conduct an experiment to test these hypotheses. Points such as the following are likely to emerge:

- Each individual should understand the total problem.
- Each individual should understand how they can contribute toward solving the problem.
- Each individual should be aware of the potential contributions of other individuals.
- There is a need to recognize the problems of other individuals in order to aid them in making their maximum contribution.
- Groups that pay attention to their own problem-solving processes are likely to be more effective than groups that do not.

The facilitator forms groups of five participants plus the observer/judge. These observers are each given a copy of the Broken Squares Observer/Judge Instruction Sheet. The facilitator then asks each group to distribute the sets of broken squares (five envelopes) among its members. The envelopes are to remain unopened until the signal to begin work is given.

The facilitator gives each group a copy of the Broken Squares Group Instruction Sheet. The facilitator then reads the instructions to the group, calling for questions or questioning groups about their understanding of the instructions.

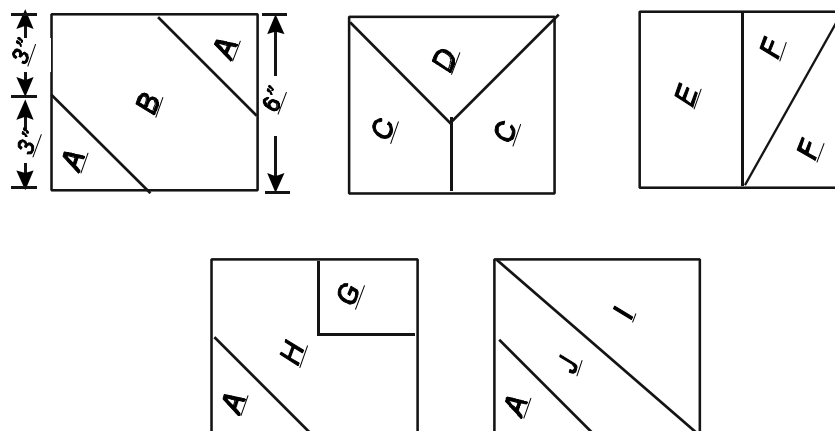
The facilitator then tells the groups to begin work. It is important that the facilitator monitors the groups during the exercise to enforce the rules established in the instructions.

When all groups have completed the task, the facilitator leads the groups in a discussion of the experience. Observations are solicited from the observers/judges. The facilitator encourages the groups to relate this experience to their parent organizations.

### Directions For Making a Set of Broken Squares

A set consists of five envelopes containing pieces of cardboard cut into different patterns which, when properly arranged, will form five squares of equal size. One set should be provided for each group of five persons.

To prepare a set, cut out five cardboard squares, each exactly 6" x 6". Place the squares in a row and mark them as below, penciling the letters lightly so they can be erased.



The lines should be drawn such that, when the pieces are cut out, those marked "A" will be exactly the same size, all pieces marked "C" the same size, etc. Several combinations are possible that will form one or two squares, but only one combination will form all five squares, each 6" x 6". After drawing the lines on the squares and labeling the sections with letters, cut each square along the lines into smaller pieces to make the parts of the puzzle.

Label the five envelopes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Distribute the cardboard pieces into the five envelopes as follows: envelope 1 has pieces I, H, E; 2 has A, A, A, C; 3 has A, J; 4 has D, F; and 5 has G, B, F, C.

Erase the penciled letter from each piece and write, instead, the number of the envelope it is in. This makes it easy to return the pieces to the proper envelope, for subsequent use, after a group has completed the task.

Each set may be made from a different color of cardboard.

### **Broken Squares Group Instruction Sheet**

Each of you has an envelope which contains pieces of cardboard for forming squares. When the facilitator gives the signal to begin, the task of your group is to form five squares of equal size. The task will not be completed until each individual has constructed a perfect square of the same size as those in front of the other group members.

The following specific limitations are imposed upon your group during this exercise:

- No member may speak.
- No member may ask another member for a piece or in any way signal that another person is to give him a piece.
- Members may voluntarily give pieces to other members.

## Broken Squares Observer/Judge Instruction Sheet

As an Observer/Judge, your job is a dual one; part observer and part judge.

As an observer, look for the following:

- Who is willing to give away pieces of the puzzle?
- Does anyone finish their puzzle and then withdraw from the group problem-solving?
- Is there anyone who continually struggles with her/his pieces, yet is unwilling to give any or all of them away?
- How many people are actively engaged in putting the pieces together?
- What is the level of frustration and anxiety?
- Is there any turning point at which the group begins to cooperate?
- Does anyone try to violate the rules by talking or pointing as a means of helping fellow members solve the problem?

As a judge, you should make sure each participant observes the following rules:

- There is to be no talking, pointing, or any other kind of communicating.
- Participants may give pieces directly to other participants but may not take pieces from other members.
- Participants may not place their pieces into the center for others to take.
- It is permissible for a member to give away all of the pieces to her/his puzzle, even if (s)he has already formed a square.

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“Broken Squares” exercise is reproduced from:

*A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training*, Volume I,  
Revised

J. William Pfeifer and John E. Jones, Editors

San Diego, CA: University Associates, Inc., 1974

## **ADDRESSING CONFLICT**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Teams are made up of members representing a variety of interests and perspectives. These multiple perspectives inevitably are the source of conflict on teams. It is through this difference of opinion or perspective that teams are exposed to new ways of looking at issues, which in turn may lead them to a better solution. Conflict on teams is not only inevitable but is also desirable. However, for a team to reach an optimal level of performance, they must learn how to manage conflicts effectively.

### **WHAT:**

This tool consists of two parts. Part 1 is an exercise to explore conflict - what causes it and how we deal with it. Part 2 is guidance on how to address conflict on teams.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help team members:

- A. Identify causes of conflict.
- B. Identify the different ways we respond to conflict.
- C. Learn a five step approach to addressing with conflicts.

### **WHEN:**

This tool can be used early in the team development to establish team norms regarding conflict, and can also be revisited as needed.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 60 minutes.

### **MATERIAL NEEDED:**

- Exploring Conflict worksheet for each team member.
- Steps for Addressing Conflict handout for each team member.
- Flip chart and markers

## Process

### Part 1: Exploring Conflict

1. **INTRODUCE** the concept that conflict is a natural and valuable part of human interaction. As humans, we have different needs, values and perspectives and we will naturally find that as we work together, we will have differences of opinion on various issues. We may find ourselves in a situation where we have to make decisions or take actions that conflict with our individual or functional organizational needs. We will also discover that we have different personalities and communication styles, and that it is sometimes a challenge to work together.
2. **DISTRIBUTE** the Exploring Conflict worksheet. Ask everyone to take a few minutes to respond individually and privately to the questions. (Approximately 5 minutes)
3. **DISCUSS** the responses to the questions with the full group. Capture the main points on the flip chart.
4. **OPEN** a discussion relative to the cause(s) of conflicts the team members have experienced either on previous teams or at the workplace (e.g., different ideas of how team should progress; different styles of interaction; diverse drivers such as quality, safety, cost). Explore each of the conflict causes briefly with the group. Ask, “Why would that cause conflict?”
5. **DISCUSS** how conflict has been dealt with on previous teams, or in the individual team member’s work setting (e.g., discussed full group, discussed one on one, avoided, ignored until blows up). Explore these in some detail. Ask, “What effect does this have on the team?” and “Is the conflict managed?”
6. **DISCUSS** how individual team members personally respond to conflict? Capture in their words how they respond to conflict. ( I leave, I blow up, I try to talk to them, I go over their heads, etc.)

FIGHT-----FLIGHT

7. Draw a continuum on the flip chart or whiteboard indicating FIGHT on one end and FLIGHT on the other. Discuss how we respond to a perceived threat, (someone challenging our ideas or blocking a path to our needs), is usually somewhere on the Fight - Flight continuum. Refer back to the team members’ responses to number 6, and to the continuum. Responses of “You ignore them.”

fall somewhere near Flight on the continuum. Responses of “You argue or blow up.” fall closer to Fight on the continuum. Responses of “You talk things over and try to resolve.” fall somewhere in the middle.

Now add “Address” to the middle of the continuum as shown below.

FIGHT ----- ADDRESS ----- FLIGHT

ASK the team members to brainstorm the pros and cons of Fight, Flight and Address. If there is room, add these comments under each title on the flip chart.

Fight	Address	Flight
Damage relationship	Resolve conflict in way that works for both	Does not resolve issue, may return
Get your way	Takes time	Could be best option for maintaining relationship
Make other team members uncomfortable	Hard to remain calm	May not get your needs addressed
May not be best solution	Both have to participate	Don't waste time arguing over little things

8. SUMMARIZE by stating that conflict is an inevitable part of teamwork. To effectively deal with conflict we must recognize our own and other's styles in dealing with conflict and be willing to move to the middle ground and address the conflict.

## Part 2: Addressing the Conflict

1. ASK the team members to discuss how they would like the team to handle conflicts should they arise on the team. What would work for them?
2. As Team Leader, you may need to prime this discussion with an example. Prepare an example of a conflict surrounding personalities, as well as a conflict surrounding team processes that you feel would be relevant to your team. **Word of caution** - *do not make it so relevant that the team tries to solve the problem, rather than discussing “how” the conflict should be handled on the team.*

**Example** - Chris likes to analyze issues in great detail, exploring the pros and cons and potential risks of the decision. Kim is comfortable making quick decisions and moving on to new issues. Chris’s behavior is frustrating Kim and Kim is withdrawing from the team. The other team members are concerned about losing Kim’s participation.

**Example** - Chris has a lot of experience in the construction industry, but not in government contracts. She is frustrated with the amount of paperwork and oversight involved in this project and is encouraging the team to take a more aggressive approach to the task. Kim has worked in the government industry his entire career, and is frustrated with the new emphasis on cost savings. He is encouraging the team to do things the same way they have always been done. Even if it is more expensive, we know it is safe.

3. From these two discussions, capture some information about how the team members feel conflict should be handled, such as dealing with personality issues in private, dealing with the facts of the issue rather than attacking the person, etc.
4. SUMMARIZE the results into team norms. For example:
  - Communicate openly with each other
  - Listen to others viewpoints
  - Deal with personal issues privately
  - No personal attacks
5. DISTRIBUTE the guidelines for addressing conflict and briefly discuss.
6. ASK team members to help each other work through conflicts, especially if the conflict is affecting team progress.



## **Guidelines For Addressing Conflict on Teams**

### **In general -**

Acknowledge that conflict is inevitable on teams. Indeed, it is desirable. Establish team norms to manage conflict effectively.

### **For a specific conflict situation -**

#### **PREPARE:**

Diagnose the conflict when it occurs. Why is there conflict? What are the needs, interests, or perspectives of the parties involved? Is this conflict impacting the team? What would be the best way to address this conflict?

Prepare yourself to address the conflict. What will you say to establish the right environment for dealing openly with the issues? What do you think the needs of the other person(s) are? How will you clearly state your needs? What are some potential resolutions to this conflict that would meet the needs of all parties?

#### **ADDRESS:**

Address the conflict with the other party or the entire team, if appropriate. Express a concern about the conflict and a desire to resolve it in a way that will work for all. Offer to talk about the issues and express a desire to hear other perspectives.

Listen to the other person(s). Try to understand the issue from their perspective(s). Confirm that you heard what they said and that you can understand (even if not agree) with their views.

Share your views.

Clarify specific differences as well as areas of agreement.

#### **EXPLORE SOLUTIONS:**

Generate ideas for resolving or at least managing the differences. List them and explore the pros and cons of each.

Try to find a solution that will work for the team. It may involve a new solution, or a compromise from each team member on some of the issues.

Show appreciation for the team's willingness to address the conflict with you.

## **SHARED LEADERSHIP**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Team leadership involves behaviors which support the teamwork needed to accomplish the task. All members of the team are responsible for the task accomplishment and the teamwork needed to accomplish it.

### **WHAT:**

This tool consists of an introduction to team leadership responsibilities, and provides an exercise in which team building behaviors are recognized.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help the team:

- A. Recognize the responsibilities involved in leading a team.
- B. Become more aware of team building behaviors.

### **WHEN:**

Use this tool to encourage shared leadership of the team.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 60 minutes.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers.
- Team Observer handout - one for each team.
- One very simple task kit for each team, such as a Lego™, K-nex™, TinkerToys™, or a jigsaw puzzle (24 pieces) with instructions.

## Process

1. On a flip chart or whiteboard, write “Team Leadership - Traditional Management.”.
2. ASK team members to think about their experiences as a team leader (including sports teams), and as a traditional manager or supervisor. Ask them to share what was different or unique to those situations. (If no one has experience as a leader, try to use examples from your experience or one that they can all relate to.) Responses may include:
  - a. Team leadership - the whole team had to perform for team to be successful
    - The team leader is more of a coach than an authority figure.
    - I had to motivate folks and worry about keeping everyone involved.
    - The team really didn’t need me after a while, they were off and running.
    - We had more team decisions, we talked about things before deciding.
  - b. Traditional - I was ultimately responsible for the performance of the individuals
    - I made assignments to individuals rather than to the team.
    - I made decisions, with their input.
    - I focused more on the task than on the relationships of the people.
3. DISCUSS that while more work settings are becoming team oriented, the traditional manager is responsible for getting the work done through individuals that work for her or him. This involves setting the direction of the work group, determining how the progress will be measured, making assignments to individuals, and tracking individual performance.
4. Teams are designed to get the work done by working together. The entire team is responsible for the task, and the team leader is primarily responsible for helping the team members function effectively as a team so they can be successful. This involves helping the team set goals and objectives; determining how the team’s progress will be measured; establishing an environment of openness, trust and cooperation on the team; and encouraging all team members to support each other in their efforts. This leadership responsibility, to help the team work effectively together, becomes the responsibility of all team members, not just the team leader.
5. One way of describing team leadership, is to look at the task behaviors and the team building behaviors that are needed.

**Task behaviors involve: (Ask for examples, or provide some from below)**

- Initiating discussion
- Asking for or sharing information
- Clarifying issues
- Summarizing
- Providing structure, such as meeting agendas, record keeping, etc.

**Team building behaviors involve: (Ask for examples or provide some from below)**

- Involving all team members
  - Recognizing team members concerns or needs
  - Acknowledging team members contributions
  - Addressing conflict
  - Dealing with internal and external communication flow
  - Assessing how the team is functioning
6. DISCUSS De-railing Behaviors - Ask the group what behaviors they have experienced on teams that have negatively impacted the team? Examples might include dominating, withdrawing, being negative, going on tangents, distracting the team with joking or cynical comments, hidden agendas, etc.
7. DISCUSS Team Leadership and Team Development - Briefly discuss the concept that the team will rely on the team leader more in the early stages of team development to provide both the task and the team building behaviors. As the team works together, the team members will take on more of these behaviors and eventually the team members will be sharing leadership responsibilities.

**EXERCISE:**

1. EXPLAIN to the participants that they will be working on a simple task as a team. (If this is a large group, divide them into smaller teams of 4-5)
2. ASK for a volunteer from each team to serve as the Observer.
3. HANDOUT the Observer Checklist to each observer and ask them to review. Explain to the teams that the observer will be noting the task and team building behaviors as they perform the task.

4. While the observer is reviewing the checklist, set the task kit at each table and tell the team they will have 10 minutes to complete their task, but not to start until told to do so.

The task kit should be a very simple task, such as Lego, K-nex, jig saw puzzle, crossword puzzle, or tinker toy; and should include simple diagram with instructions as to what they are to build. Most kits come with one or two options.

5. Determine if the Observer has any questions. Answer as necessary.
6. Instruct the team to begin. Check the time periodically and call time at 10 minutes.
7. First, ask the group how they felt they performed as a team. Ask them what worked well? What specifically did their teammates do that helped them accomplish their task?
8. Ask the Observers to share what they observed with their team, and help the team identify which behaviors were being used.
9. Summarize the exercise by asking the Observers to share some of the task and team building behaviors that were observed.

## Observer Checklist - Instructions

**Part 1 - DURING THE TASK** - As the team works on the task, try to capture the interactions of the team members below. Note who says what. For example:

*John*    *How did you do that?*

*Sara*    *Thanks that really helped.*

*Kim*    *Let's try it this way.*

**Part 2 - AFTER THE TASK** - After the facilitator gets feedback from the team on how they did, share your observations with the team and help them identify which behavior was being used. For example:

<u>Interaction</u>	<u>Behavior</u>
<i>John</i> <i>How did you do that?</i>	<i>Asking for information.</i>
<i>Sara</i> <i>Thanks that really helped.</i>	<i>Giving positive feedback.</i>
<i>Kim</i> <i>Let's try it this way.</i>	<i>Providing structure.</i>

### EXAMPLES:

<u>TASK BEHAVIORS</u>	<u>TEAM BUILDING BEHAVIORS</u>
Providing structure	Encouraging participation
Offering ideas	Acknowledging others efforts
Asking for information	Praising
Clarifying	Active listening
Summarizing	Managing differences/conflict
Initiating action	Considering others ideas
Checking for agreement/consensus	Looking at alternatives

**Observer Checklist**

WHO	SAID OR DID WHAT	BEHAVIOR

## **ESTABLISHING TEAM PROCESSES**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

As with any organization, a team needs some element of control and procedures to guide its activities, such as a meeting agenda, minutes, and action plans. Involving the team members in establishing these processes builds commitment and cohesion among the team members.

### **WHAT:**

This tool consists of guidelines for establishing team processes, including team meetings and action plans.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help team members learn how to:

- A. Conduct an effective meeting.
- B. Track team progress.

### **WHEN:**

This tool is helpful in the early stages of team work, or if teams seem unfocused.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 60 minutes.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Flip chart or whiteboard and markers

### Process:

1. Introduce the concept that like any organization, teams use processes to help them accomplish work. These process may not be formal work processes, and may not require elaborate procedures. But, like any work process, the team will be more effective if they discuss and agree upon how they want to accomplish their work, i.e., establishing their work processes.
2. ASK - What work do teams do? What processes are needed?  
(Teams meet to share ideas, experiences, etc., to address common problems.)
3. ASK - What else?  
(Teams solve problems, make decisions, report their recommendations to others,...)
4. STATE: These are all examples of team processes. The ones we will focus on in this session are how we conduct meetings and track our progress.

### Part 1: Meeting Guidelines

1. ASK - What are your experiences with meetings? What has worked well and what has not worked well? Capture responses on flip chart or whiteboard. For example:

#### WORKED WELL

Start on time  
Follow agenda  
Clear purpose and direction  
Everyone participates  
Conclude with summary/actions  
Minutes document discussion

#### DID NOT WORK WELL

Never start on time  
No agenda or get off track  
No clear purpose go around in circles  
One person dominates, others withdraw  
Never know what was decided

2. ASK team members to brainstorm what guidelines they would like to have for their meetings. **Generate a list of Meeting Guidelines for your team.** For example:

Meetings will start on time  
Meetings will begin with setting the agenda  
Meetings will be led by one of us  
A person will be designated to take notes at every meeting  
All members will participate in the discussion  
Meetings will end with a summary of decisions and actions

3. ASK for a volunteer to type up these guidelines, to make a copy for each member, and to post at each meeting.

## **Part 2: Tracking Team Progress**

Team membership is often made up of people who have other full time jobs outside of the team. Often, one of the challenges facing the team is to help team members transition from their other full-time job to the team, focus quickly on the team goals, and become a productive contributor. One process that can help team members make this transition quickly is the way the team tracks and documents its activities. The meeting minutes discussed in Part One is one way to do this. Another way is to establish a simple method for tracking the team's current activities. This usually stems from the action plans and assignments that occur in the team meetings.

Here is a simple but helpful way to track team progress and keep team members informed.

1. BRAINSTORM major areas of concern or issues to be addressed by the team. For example:
  - Costs
  - Understand process
  - Identify user complaints
2. PRIORITIZE, if needed. Use a simple process of prioritization that will work for your team. For example, which is most important if resources are limited, which comes first if these are sequential steps, etc.
3. IDENTIFY Who will do What to address this issue, and the Time line. For example:
  - John will interview senior line managers on line and report his findings at the next meeting.
  - Kim and Sara will map out a high level process and present it at the next meeting.
4. Review and update this list at every meeting. It becomes a living document of your team's progress toward your goals.

## **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Effective team development depends on the willingness and ability of team members to communicate with one another in an honest and open manner. Team members should be encouraged to participate freely in team discussions by clearly asserting their ideas and listening openly to other's thoughts.

### **WHAT:**

This tool consists of information on the communication process and factors that can enhance or distract from interpersonal communication

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help team members

- A. Understand the dynamics of interpersonal communication.
- B. Practice skills in sending and receiving messages.

### **WHEN:**

This tool is helpful at any time in the team's development.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 30 minutes

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Paper and pencil for the participants
- Copies of Diagram A and B for each pair of participants

## Process

1. Introduce the topic of interpersonal communication. Briefly discuss that as humans, the only way we can interact with, influence, learn from, or relate to other humans is through our communication skills.
2. ASK - How would you define communication? or What is communication?  
(sending a message, sending and receiving a message)
3. SHARE that there are 6 main components to communication
  - Sender - has a need to communicate
  - Message - the symbols the sender has chosen to transmit his/her thoughts
  - Channel - the manner in which the sender has chosen to send the message
  - Receiver - of the message, must decode the message
  - Feedback - new message the Receiver sends back to confirm the original message was received.
4. ASK - How do we know if we have been effective in communicating?
  - Mutual understanding occurs.
  - Receiver understand the message, confirms this with the sender through the feedback.
5. EXERCISE - to experience the communication model. Distribute paper and pencils to the participants.
  - a. Have participants pair up.
  - b. Explain the exercise - Your partner will describe a diagram to you which you will draw. You cannot see the diagram until you are finished, and your partner should not see your picture until you are done. Then you will switch roles and repeat with another diagram.
  - c. Give a copy of Diagram A to one of each pair.
  - d. Have the person with the diagram (i.e., the Sender) describe the image of the diagram with out showing the diagram to his/her partner (i.e., the Receiver). The Receiver will draw the diagram using only the instructions received from the Sender. The Sender cannot look at the Receiver's drawing until after they are done. The Receiver cannot see the original diagram until they are done.

- e. Test - did they have a common understanding of the diagram? Do both pictures match?
  - f. Repeat the exercise with Diagram B and partners reversing roles.
5. ASK - What can promote better understanding? Ensure responses include the following:
- Clear messages
  - Active listening
  - Minimize distractions
6. ASK - What gets in the way of understanding? Ensure the responses include the following:
- Different perspectives or perceptions about the issues.
  - Poor listening/
  - Not being open to others opinions.
  - Jumping to conclusions about what is being said.
  - Sending messages that are “blaming”, or “put-downs”.
7. SHARE with the participants that feedback is used to confirm understanding of the message:

UNDERSTANDING FEEDBACK	CONFUSION FEEDBACK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledge the message/sender</li> <li>- Clarify information</li> <li>- Show understanding of content</li> <li>- Recognize others feelings</li> <li>- Give appropriate praise/guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ignore or change topic</li> <li>- Interrupt or give your ideas</li> <li>- Be indirect</li> <li>- Send mixed messages</li> <li>- Criticize or judge</li> </ul>

8. DISCUSS how the confirming feedback helps build a more open and honest relationship with the other person, while the confusion messages destroy trust and limit cooperation. (May want to ask how they feel when they receive confusing feedback.)

## Communication Styles

1. Introduce the concept that each of us have developed patterns of communication similar to the patterns we have developed for the other things we do in life.
  - a. Have the participants write their names on paper.
  - b. Next, have them put the pencil in their other hand and write their name again.
  - c. ASK them how that felt? (awkward, clumsy, hard to do)
  - d.. ASK them how it felt the first time? (easy, didn't even think about it)
2. We develop habits of doing things in our life to be more efficient . . . we don't stop and think about every single thing we do. We have developed these habits for different reasons; it may be easier, it may be the way we are taught, it may have worked for us in a previous situation, etc. The same is true for our communication style. We have developed patterns of communicating.
3. Unfortunately, while our communication patterns may have been effective in some situations, they may not be effective in all situations.
4. To be a more effective communicator on teams, it is important to:
  - Understand your own style.
  - Understand others style and their comfort zones.
  - Flex your style to make others comfortable communicating with you.

NOTE: If your organization offers training in styles, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or the Wilson Learning Social Styles, it may be beneficial to request that training.

5. A general discussion of the types of communication follows:
  - a. Draw the following continuum on the board:

Passive-----Assertive-----Aggressive

- b. **Passive Communication Style.** People using a passive communication style tend to be quieter. They let others lead the conversation. Passive communicators tend to be more thoughtful before responding.
- c. **Assertive Communication Style.** People using an assertive communication style tend to be an active participant in the communication, both stating their ideas as well as listening to others.

- d. **Aggressive Communication Style.** People using an aggressive communication style tend to drive the conversation, openly stating their opinions and ideas, and comfortably challenging other's ideas.
- 6. ASK participants if they can place themselves on this continuum. (Many will say - it depends on the situation.)
- 7. CLOSE by encouraging participants to be open, honest communicators, and to be tolerant of the various communication styles. Communication is going to be the means by which you accomplish your team goals through gathering and analyzing information, and making recommendations to others.

Diagram A

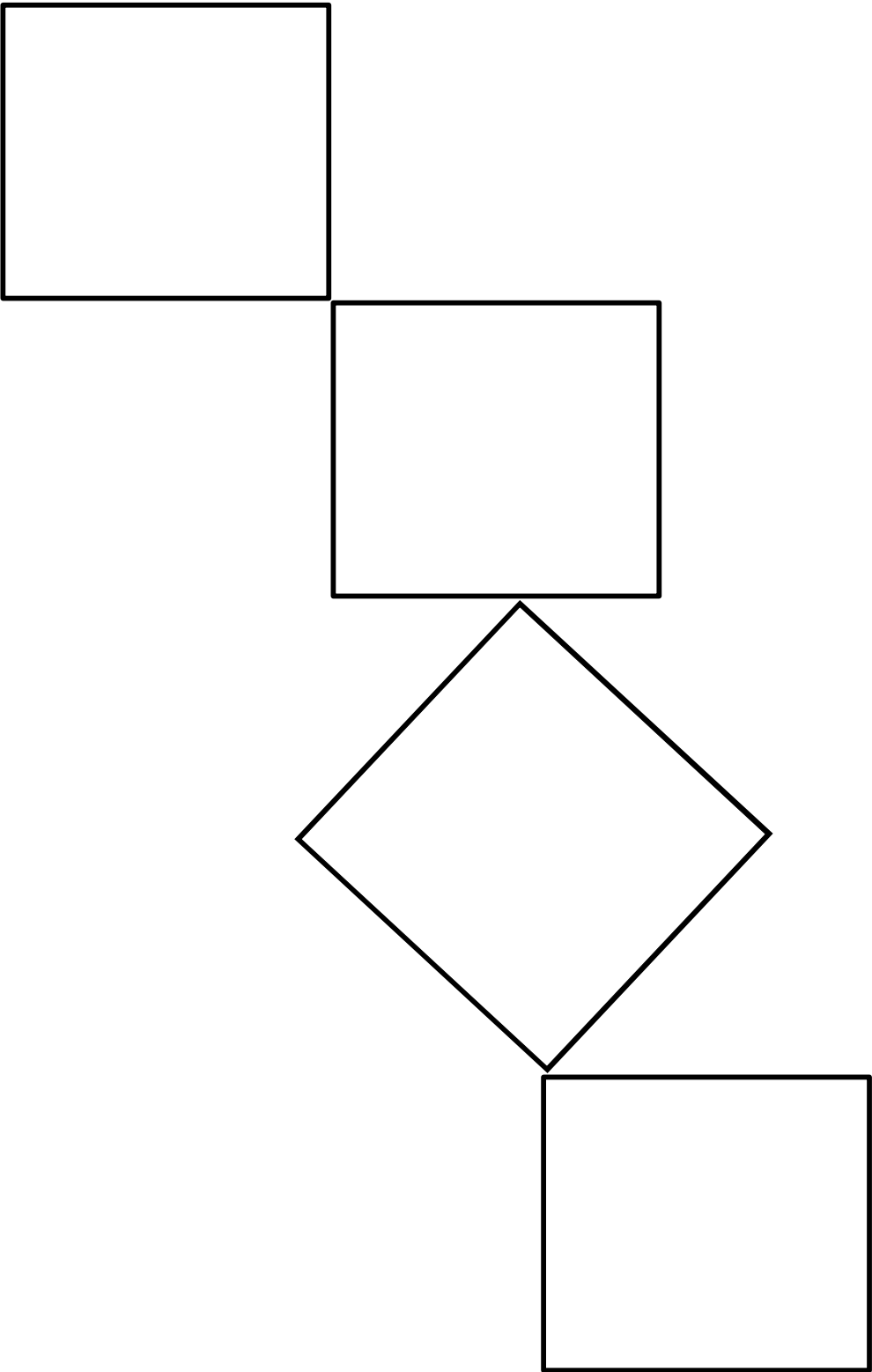
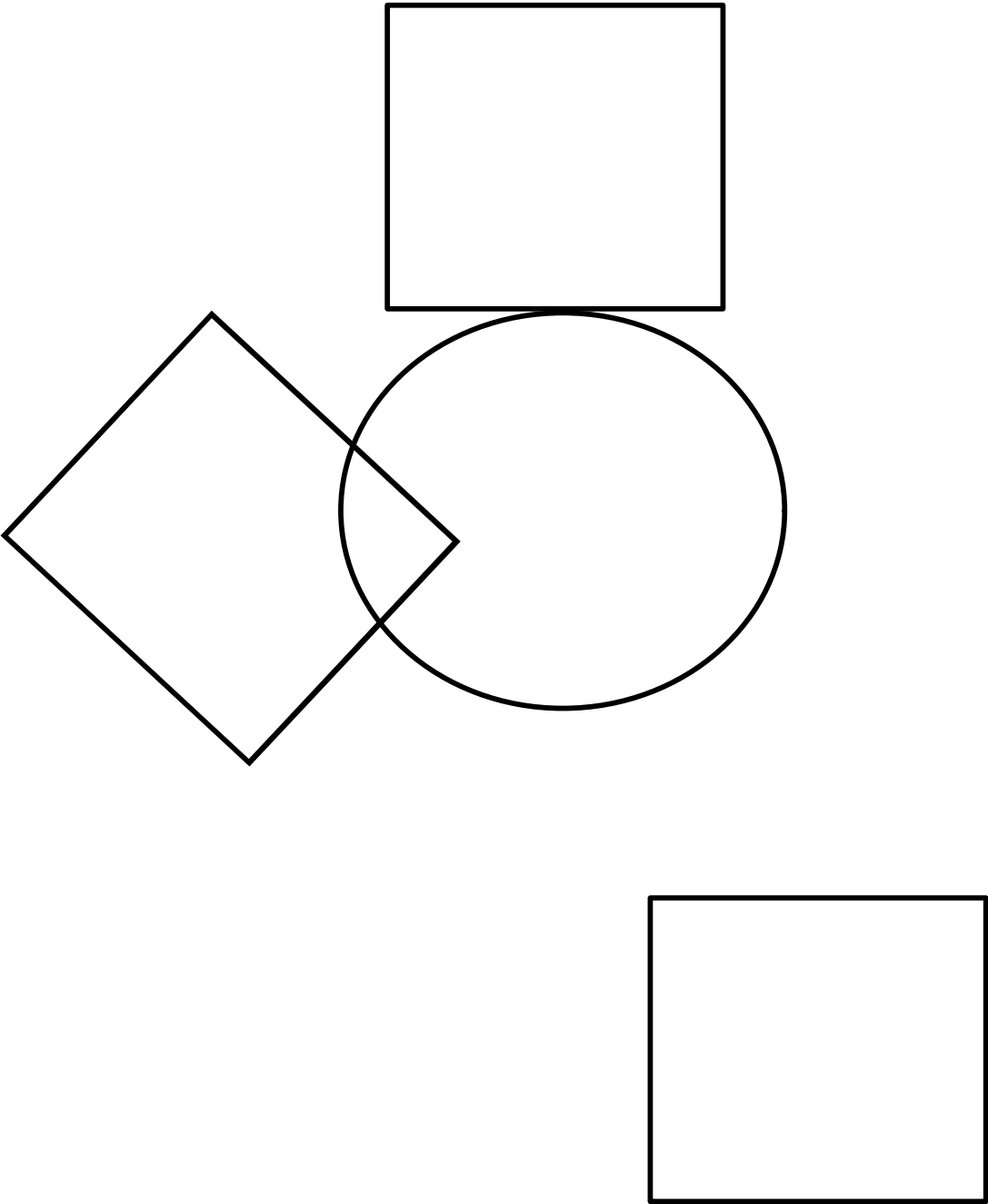


Diagram B



## **CREATIVITY AND SYNERGY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

One of the benefits of using teams to address issues is that teams provide an opportunity for synergy—the generation of new and better ideas as a result of the sharing of different perspectives. This requires team comfort with creative problem solving and decision making, as well as developing an atmosphere of openness and appreciation of differences.

### **WHAT:**

This tool is an introduction to several creativity techniques.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help teams become more adept at creative thinking and building on one another's ideas to create synergy.

### **WHEN:**

Use this tool at the idea generation step of problem solving and decision making or whenever the team is stymied.

### **TIME:**

Time will vary depending on which technique and exercise you choose to use. Each are approximately 15-20 minutes.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Varies - see each exercise for this information

## Brainstorming New Ways

1. INTRODUCE the concept of the need to build on the diverse background brought together on the team to develop new and improved ways of doing things. Up to this point in the Problem Solving and Decision Making process, teams have been focusing primarily on concrete facts, data, and other information. It is now time to change the thinking on the team to more abstract “what if” and “what could be” thinking.
2. INTRODUCTORY EXERCISE
  - a. Materials needed:
    - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
    - Common object from room
  - b. Divide the team into two groups. Introduce the exercise by saying that we are going to have a little competition. There will be several rounds, and may the best team win.
  - c. The winner will be decided by how many rounds are won.
  - d. **ROUND ONE** is decided by “quantity of responses.”
    - 1) Hand each team a common object (e.g., a coffee cup or a tape dispenser). Challenge the team to identify as many uses for the object as they can in 3 minutes. **Time them.**
    - 2) Stop the team after 3 minutes. Count the items and announce the winner.
    - 3) Discuss what happened in the teams. How comfortable did team members feel in the process they used? What would they do differently if they could do it again? What helped them be more creative? What could have helped?
  - e. **ROUND TWO** is also decided by quantity of new items. Have the teams either start a new list or draw a separating line between Round One items and Round Two items.

- 1) Assign a team member on each team to the following roles: 5 year old boy, person on a deserted island, person trapped in an elevator, scientist, person lost on the moon.
  - 2) Explain to the teams that they will have 3 minutes to think of one or more objects, complete with appropriate or potential uses for the object(s), common to the role they have been assigned. **Time them.**
  - 3) Count the responses. Award the winner.
  - 4) Proceed to Round 3 only if you need a tie breaker.
- f. **ROUND THREE** is also decided based on quantity of responses. Draw a separator or start a clean sheet of paper.
- 1) Instruct each team that they will proceed round-robin to develop a list of ideas. Each new idea has to relate to the previous idea. The connection between the two doesn't have to be noted. However, the team member may want to explain it to help others generate ideas. For example, I start and say that the cup could be used to hold water, you are next and you say, "Or measure water." The next person says, "As a measurement of distance, i.e. 3 cup lengths = 1 foot.", and so on...
  - 2) Call time at 3 minutes and announce the winner.

## Team Synergy

### 1. EXERCISE -

- a. Materials needed:
  - flip chart or whiteboard and markers
  - Shallow box lid with a cloth to cover it
  - About 20 - 25 small, diverse items, including one or two unusual or hard to recognize items, but mostly common everyday items (e.g., pen, coin, lipstick, nail clippers, staple remover, piece of candy, credit card, odd screw or small part of machinery, small sticky pad).
- b. Prior to meeting with the team, arrange the items in a box so they are spaced out as much as possible. Cover the box with the cloth.

- c. Introduce to the team members that synergy is not only helpful in identifying “more” ideas, it is also helpful in identifying “better” ideas.
- d. Divide the group into two or more sub-teams. Separate them from each other.
- e. Explain the rules:
  - 1) There are a number of items in this box and that you are going to allow each sub-team to view the items for 15 seconds. After that they are to return to their seats and **INDIVIDUALLY AND PRIVATELY** write down as many of these items as they can.
  - 2) Explain that when all the members of each sub-team have completed their individual lists, the sub-team is to meet together and make a new list of all the items they can collectively think of.
  - 3) When each sub-team has finished, I will show you all the items in the box and we will tally up your team’s synergy score.
- f. Call up the first sub-team. Lift the cloth for 15 seconds. Tell them to go back to their seats and begin the silent listing. Do the same with the other sub-team(s).
- g. After the teams have completed the individual and team generation of the lists, help them score their work using the following matrix:

GROUP	INDIVIDUAL HIGH	AVERAGE	TEAM
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

- **Individual (High)** - List the total number of items identified by the team member having the highest number of correctly identified items.
- **Average** - List the team’s average individual score.
- **Team** - List the number of items correctly identified collectively by the team.

- h. Discuss the results. Emphasize that teams can do better by combining their resources. We each approach the challenge from different individual perspectives, and we were able to share with and learn from each other to build a team product that was better than the original.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Effective teams have an agreed upon approach to solving problems and making decisions. This allows the team to work systematically toward quality solutions.

### **WHAT:**

This tool consists of an overview of the key steps to problem solving and decision making, and an introduction to common techniques to support those efforts.

### **WHY:**

This tool is designed to help team members:

- A. Learn the key steps in problem solving and decision making.
- B. Learn techniques for gathering and sorting information.

### **WHEN:**

Use this tool as team members begin to identify and work on issues, or when team seems to be having trouble making progress.

### **TIME:**

Approximately 45 minutes

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Flip chart or whiteboard and markers

## Process

1. ASK the participants if they have been a part of a problem solving or decision making team before. If so, what were some of the approaches used on that team to address the problems or make the recommendations? Typical responses might include “We mapped out the process.”, “We charted the problems occurring.”, “We interviewed the users.”, “We re-engineered the process.”, “We used Kepner-Tregoe.”
2. DISCUSS that there are commonalities in each of these approaches. STATE that a particular approach will not be learned today. Rather, the common steps, as well as some techniques to help accomplish those steps will be addressed.

For example: Let's say that this team was brought together to address a problem identified by management as “safety concerns in plant.”

- a. ASK - What are some things that we would consider doing to address this issue? (Typical responses - Gather information, interview workers, prioritize issues, brainstorm solutions, etc.)
- b. An important first step, before getting too far into data gathering and analysis is to clearly define the issue that this team is tasked to address.
- c. WRITE on flip chart or whiteboard -
  1. *Clearly define the problem/concern.*
- d. ASK - Why is this a logical first step? (Typical responses - helps you better understand the situation, helps you determine what approach you need to take to resolve it, focuses the team on the same specific issue, etc.)
  - 1) The problem definition is similar to the team purpose in that it should be a clear, concise statement about the issue the team is addressing. For example:
    - a) Safety concerns in plant is a broad challenge, what specifically will our team address?
    - b) Reduce the number of health risks in the plant.
    - c) Design the safety awareness program for the plant.
- e. The next step is to gather information about the issue in order to better understand it. Write the following on the flip chart under #1:

2. *Gather information to understand the issue.*

- f. Some of the techniques we can use to gather information about the issue in order to better define and clearly understand it include:

- Interviews and/or surveys
- Process flow mapping
- Process - Supplier - Customer (PSC) modeling
- Charts, graphs, and diagrams of process data

Optional: Discuss each briefly and give examples using flips or overheads (See attachments)

- g. Once we clearly understand the issue, the next step might be to find out what is causing the problem, or what is driving the decision. ADD the following to the flip chart: *3 - Defining the causes/drivers*

- h. Defining a problem's causes and/or drivers involves reviewing the data gathered in step two and determining the high priority issues or where you might want to focus your efforts. This involves organizing and analyzing the data; looking for common themes expressed in the interviews, areas of most frustration in the work processes, or high priority concerns identified in your charts or graphs. Some of the techniques that might be helpful in this step include:

- Cause and Effect diagrams
- Force-field analysis

- I. Once the high priority concerns are identified, the next step is to identify and evaluate potential solutions. Add the following to the flip chart:  
*4 - Identify and evaluate potential solutions*

- j. This step involves generating ideas for solutions, evaluating those ideas, and coming to consensus on the solutions to be recommended. Some of the techniques that might be used in this step include:

- Brainstorming
- Nominal Group Technique (NGT)
- Consensus building

Optional: Discuss each briefly and give examples using flips or overheads (See attachments)

(NOTE: Additional creativity techniques are covered in more detail in the tool kit **Creativity and Synergy**.)

- k. The last step is planning for implementation. Add the following to the flip chart:  
*5 - Planning for implementation*

A technique that might be helpful to teams in planning for implementation is evaluating recommendations both on their ability to resolve the problem, and how well they can be implemented. A recommendation should be accompanied by a well thought out implementation plan.

## **Brainstorming**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Brainstorming is a technique used to solicit ideas from a group of people on a given subject in a non-threatening environment- each person in a group is asked to propose a theory or idea relative to a specific issue. To encourage creative thinking and expression, no discussion or criticism of theories or ideas is permitted, and all ideas are recorded.

### **APPLICATION**

Brainstorming can be used to identify areas for improvement, customer needs, ways to improve processes, etc. or whenever team knowledge or concerns need to be obtained, organized, discussed, and acted upon.

### **STEPS**

1. Assemble employees who may have ideas about the issue being discussed.
2. Going around the group systematically, have each person in turn present an idea or pass until the next round. Alternatively, those present may be invited to speak as ideas occur to them. While this less structured approach tends to reduce the stress level on more shy participants, it may lead to domination by the most vocal participants.
3. On a flipchart or chalkboard record every idea in the speaker's words.
4. Determine what action needs to be taken as a result of the discussion. Further ranking and grouping of ideas is often done after the ideas have been recorded.

## **Cause-and-Effect Diagram**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Cause-and-Effect Diagram is a graphic representation of the relationship and interactions between an effect (problem) and its potential causes. It can also be used to identify and sort the success factors or improvement opportunities in a process.

### **APPLICATION**

The Cause and Effect Diagram is used to effectively understand a process, identify areas for improvement, determine factors that influence product quality, identify the factors that may contribute to a problem or its resolution and organize brainstorming ideas.

### **STEPS**

1. Name the problem or factor to be improved. Record this in a box to the right of the available writing space.
2. Draw a horizontal line from the problem in the box. From this baseline, draw six branches at 45-degree angles proceeding up and down. Label these branches to correspond to the major causes of the problem.
3. Brainstorm to determine more detailed causes, and attach these as subbranches to the main ones already identified.
4. Eliminate causes that do not apply.
5. Discuss the remaining causes and identify those that are the most important.
6. Work to eliminate, desensitize, control or emulate the most important causes.

## Critical Path

### DESCRIPTION

Critical Path is a technique for project planning and tracking. The critical path is the longest set of adjoining activities in a project. The estimated time to project completion is the estimated time required to complete all these activities.

### APPLICATION

The Critical Path is used by teams to develop action plans and schedule tasks.

### STEPS

1. Identify and list individual activities in a project. Assign an alphabetical code (A, B, C, etc.) to each activity.
2. In columns parallel to the list of activities, indicate the length of time each activity is expected to take, the shortest time in which it could be completed, and the longest time it might take.
3. In another column parallel to the list of activities, indicate by code the activity that must be completed before a particular activity can be begun.
4. The critical path is the longest path of chained activities; delay in one of these activities will cause delay in the entire project schedule. For example, a project might have activities A through S. After steps 1-3 above have been completed, we find that activities A - F, I - M, and R-S are critical path. Activities G, H, N, O, P, Q are tangential activities that lie outside the critical path. Furthermore, we see that activities C, D, and E can be started concurrently when activity B has been completed. However, activity C must be completed before activity F can be started. And so on . . .

## **Flow Chart**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Flow Chart is a graphic means of presenting the steps or activities that constitute a process. The output of one step is an input to the next step in the process. The flow chart is constructed using standardized symbols to provide a road map of a process.

### **APPLICATION**

Flow charting facilitates understanding of a process, provides a baseline for improvement activities, and identifies possible redundancy and weaknesses.

### **STEPS**

1. Determine the steps or activities in the process under consideration.
2. Determine the sequence of steps, including decision points.
3. Graphically depict the sequence using interconnecting symbols that contain discrete descriptions of the process steps or activities.

Process steps are usually represented as rectangles and stated in active voice (assign work, process request, etc.). Decision points are shown by diamond shapes and arrows are used to show the flow from step to step.

## **Nominal Group Technique (NGT)**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a structured idea-generating technique similar to brainstorming, but the idea generation and resolution are done individually and without a lot of discussion.

### **APPLICATION**

NGT is highly effective for prioritizing improvement projects or for identifying significant barriers when consensus is desired and varying opinions exist.

### **STEPS**

1. Present the issue and instruct participants to generate ideas silently. (Allow about five minutes.)
2. Gather ideas round-robin style, one at a time, and record on a flipchart.
3. When all ideas have been recorded, they are discussed. Duplicates are eliminated, and similar ideas are combined.
4. Have participants vote on the items individually using a slip of paper for each vote. Assign the highest point value to the most important. For example, if you allow 5 votes per person, each would select five items and assign points in this manner: Highest gets 5 points, next 4, next 3, next 2, and last 1 point.
5. Collect the votes and tally on the flip chart.
6. Discuss the results and select the number of issue to address depending on the votes.

## **Process Supplier/Customer (PSC) Model**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Process Supplier/Customer (PSC) Model is systematic approach for identifying and modeling the suppliers, process owners, operators, and customers, along with the inputs (materials, machinery, manpower, procedures, etc.) and outputs (finished goods, reports, trained personnel, etc.) of the process under review.

### **APPLICATION**

The PSC model is used to identify the organizational links involved and to determine who to involve in an improvement effort. The PSC model is also used to identify the aspects of the issue which should be reviewed during an improvement effort. The PSC model becomes the initial information for creating a complete process flow chart.

### **STEPS**

1. Identify the process(s) which transform(s) inputs into outputs.
2. Identify the organization and/or person(s) who owns and operates the process.
3. Identify the inputs to the process and the suppliers of those inputs. Inputs can include (materials, machinery, labor, procedures, data, etc.)
4. Identify the outputs (products, finished goods, reports, trained personnel, etc.) of the process and the customer(s) who receives these outputs.
5. Capture this information in an easily understood format such as a diagram model.